



WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB TO HAVE NEW HOME

**ORGANIZATION HAS
RAISED \$100,000 FOR
ERECTION OF COMMODIOUS
BUILDING WHICH MAY BE
COMPLETED BY END OF
1913**

By Anne O'Hagan.
SOME of us, not yet entirely decrepit, recall a time when a favorite thesis of the minor essayist was, "Women are essentially non-clubbable." The adjective referred, of course, to the quality that makes friendly and tolerant association possible, and women wasted few words in verbal response to the dictum. They merely kept on "clubbing." And to-day the house wreckers are razing walls in East 52d street in order that to-morrow the builders may begin to put up an eight story building to shelter a women's club, which during the last twelve years has outgrown one domicile after another—the Women's University Club. It is, after all, a more effective resort than any verbal one, however witty, as to the essential unclubbability of women.

The Women's University Club will soon be able to celebrate a length of existence which, in matrimonial alliances, is regarded as practically certain proof of the compatibility of the parties to the contract—its "silver" anniversary. In 1914 it will be twenty-five years old, having been organized in 1889. It has, therefore, proved its right to a home of its own, being the oldest of the women's clubs in New York established primarily for the purpose of social intercourse among the members. It is also the first women's university club in the country, though now the college women of many other cities have followed its example and have established clubs upon the same comfortable lines.

AN EIGHT STORY STRUCTURE.

The home is to be one which the little group of college women who founded the club probably did not foresee in even their most rosy visions of long life and prosperity. It is to be an eight story building in 52d street, just east of Park avenue. The facade of the two lower stories will be of white limestone, that of the upper ones of buff colored brick, with limestone trimmings. The exterior decorations will be the delicate tracery and medallions which the famous group of Adams brothers made popular in the late eighteenth century. Across the second story there will be a gracefully railed balcony on which the big living room will open by means of three French windows. This room, by the way, expressed even in the non-committal lines and dashes of the architect's blueprint, promises delight to the club members. Its noble proportions—for its height is about 17 feet—its long windows, opening upon the balcony, which imagination already decks with prim tube of laurel and box, would be almost enough, but, in addition, it is to contain a fireplace at each end—a fireplace of generous proportions, four feet wide in the opening. The library, on the floor above, is also double equipped with that which every normal woman regards as the most important feature in her home—the fireplace—increasingly difficult to encompass in New York. Back of the library are committee and card rooms.

Entrance to the house will be almost on a level with the sidewalk. Within the vestibule a rise of three shallow steps will lead to a passage on one side of which is the visitors' waiting room and a cloak-room, while on the other side are dressing and toilet rooms.

INTERIOR OF BUILDING.

Proceeding toward the interior of the building one will reach a large hall in which are stairs, elevator and telephone booths; at the end of this corridor will be the large dining room, 31 feet 6 inches by 25 feet 9 inches, also with its fireplace. A private dining room or tea room, together with the necessary serving rooms, is also on this floor. In the basement beneath are the kitchens, store rooms and trunk rooms, as well as the servants' dining room. In the thought of the capacity of the storage rooms, by the way, the heart of the house committee is resting happily.

The dragon, increased cost of living, is an almost insurmountable opponent to those who are unable to buy foodstuffs in quantity. This has been one of the chief difficulties with which the club has hitherto wrestled constantly striving during the last twelve years, since it took its first whole house at No. 13 East 24th street, to adapt edifices built for families of five or six to the needs of an organization of from three hundred to a thousand, and to serve meals to from sixty to a hundred persons each day from kitchens and pantries which were never intended to cope with more than a semi-occasional twenty.

Not only with pride, but with a certain measure of commercial interest also do the club members study the plan of their new assembly room. It is over the dining room, in the rear of the first floor, of the new building, a hall 33x38 feet, with a balcony at one end. It is proposed that in this room not only will the club hear its own lions roar, entertain its distinguished guests and conduct its own entertainments, but that outside organizations, not so well equipped with space, may hire it for large meetings. Of course, only those organizations may have this privilege which include in their membership a member of the Women's University Club.

ROOMS FOR RENT.

The hall may also be rented to members for any private entertainment or lecture which they may wish to give. On the seventh floor of the new building there are other rooms which, it is hoped, may be rented permanently to smaller college associations, such as the Women's University Club itself was back in the old days when Miss Maria Porter Bruce (now Mrs. James Kimball), Miss Helen Dawes Brown and other young college graduates

found a room hired from Barnard College on Madison avenue adequate to their needs. On the seventh floor there are also lounging rooms, dressing rooms and lockers, all of which minister to the contentment of the suburban member with a hectic town engagement list including a luncheon at 1:30, a meeting at 4, a tea at 5 and dinner and opera in the evening—or any other variations of the crowded afternoon of the suburbanite.

Forty-two bedrooms with from twenty to thirty baths will be let partly to permanent and partly to transient lodgers. A number of the rooms have their own baths adjoining; the others have running water, and closets are generous. The rooms which are reserved for transients may be occupied by either members of their guests. A member may "put up" at the club for a period of not more than two weeks in a year a guest who is not eligible to membership—a blessed privilege in a city of cramped apartments. And what the privilege of residence in the clubhouse, with its dignity, its cheer, its congenial associations and its convenience must be to the member who is working in New York, away from her own home, can be told only by those women who recall a series of experiments in the depressing possibilities of boarding houses.

SOLVING THE LIVING PROBLEM.

If the club were considering only the comfort of this one class of its membership it would almost be justified in its existence. The situation of refined and well educated young women, coming to New York to take up their careers or their temporary occupations away from their homes, is really pathetic in the matter of their lodging and board. Dreary Odysseys might be written of their adventures in search of very simple luxuries—cleanliness, cheer, wholesomeness—or, at any rate, in their search for these necessities at a moderate price. There has been, on the whole, more of an effort made to fit the requirements of the working girl of the most properly and less educated and less trained classes in this regard than those of the college graduate and her type. There are a few—a very inadequate number, to be sure—boarding houses and houses conducted for the benefit of the more impecunious class of the wage working woman—homes in which she may be sure of hygienic surround-

ings, of nourishing food and of the conveniences she needs—laundries where she may do her own laundry work, sewing machine rooms where she may do her own stitching, parlors and assembly rooms in which some effort is made to supply her social nature with some of its requirements, all at a price within her means.

But for the young working woman or the graduate student, of the college class, there is no analogous provision made, except in so far as such a club as the Women's University Club makes it. In the days before she is able to establish her own household gods with those of a companionable mate or two in some apartment house, the college woman working in New York is compelled to wander from one sordid experience in housing to another, searching for the necessities of her physical as well as of her spiritual existence—order, brightness, wholesomeness—with their own inherent beauty. And in no other place in the world do these apparently simple conditions cost so much as in New York.

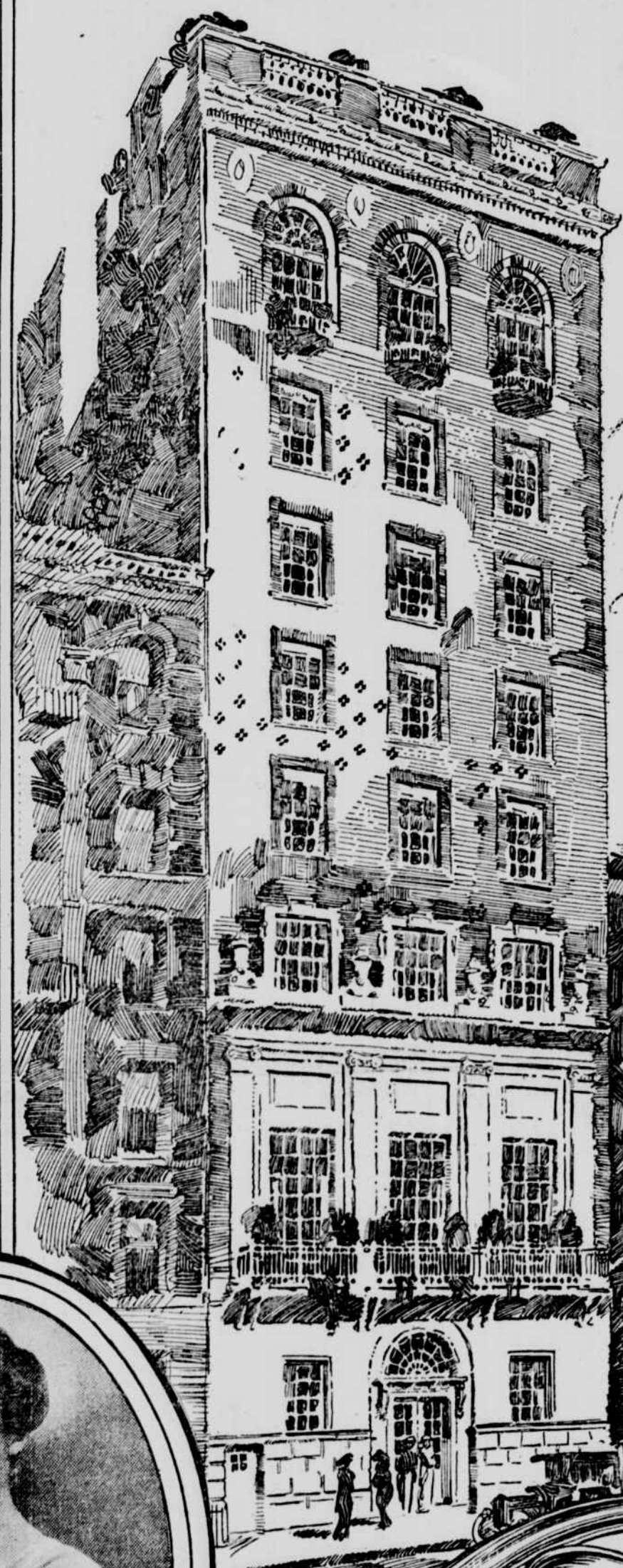
Well, to a certain very limited extent the new building of the Women's University Club is going to solve that problem for a part of its membership. And perhaps in solving it it may prove the example for which a whole world of boarding and lodging house keepers is waiting.

There is probably no feature of the new house in which the members, especially the younger ones, take more pleasure than in the gymnasium, which, with its lockers, baths, showers and dressing rooms, occupies part of the eighth floor and a mezzanine gallery above. If there is one thing which makes New York thoroughly distasteful to the recent graduate, with her memories of "gym," of basketball, of rowing, of swimming, it is the extreme difficulty of getting exercise without taking a Sabbath day's journey to find it. But the new clubhouse solves this problem to a large extent. Out of this mezzanine a hall opens with stairs leading to what it is hoped will one day be a most charming feature of the club—a roof garden, with a pergola, in which tea may be had in warm weather. But funds are not yet available for carrying out this part of the plan.

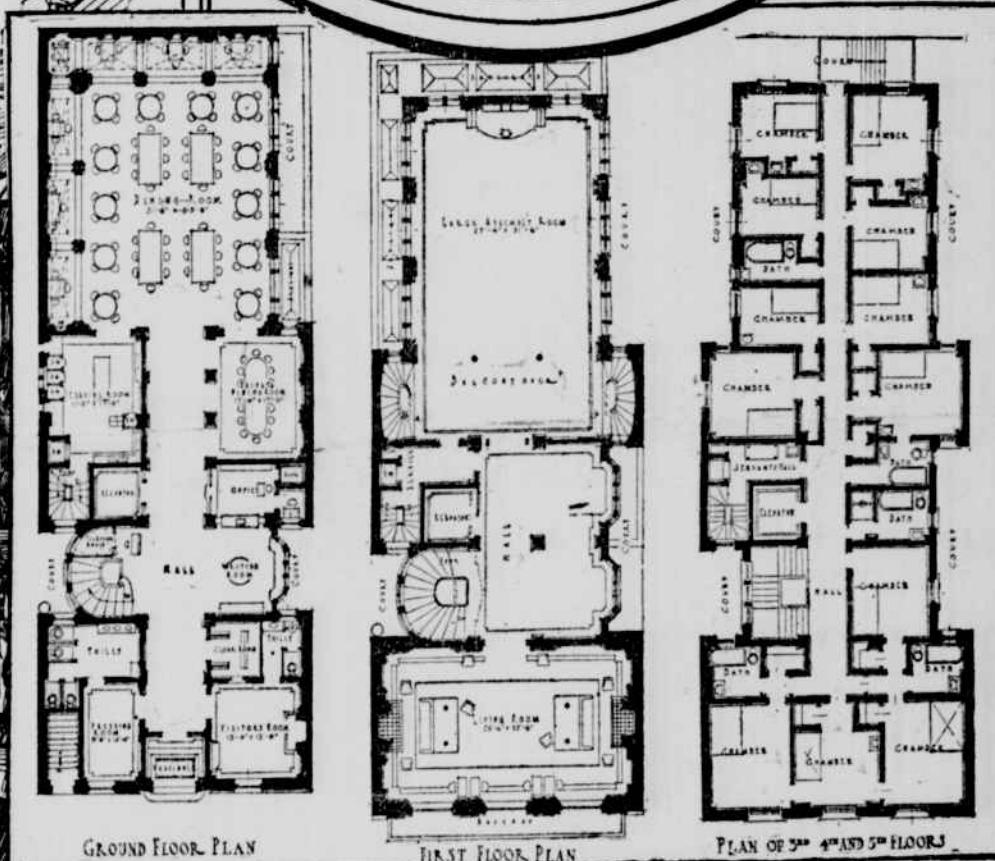
Speaking of funds, the story of the raising of the money for this complete and beautiful new clubhouse is not the least inspiring thing about it. Home after home had been outgrown; the room hired from Barnard in 1889 gave place to quarters in the Berkeley Lyceum, in West 44th street. Then came the house at No. 13 East 24th street, taken by the club in 1901. That was followed by larger but shortly inadequate quarters at No. 30 Gramercy Park, and that in turn by the old Yale Club, at No. 17 Madison Square old Yale Club, and the latter organization is to have only the obligations of a tenant, although provision has been made for the purchase of the property ultimately

by the club upon repayment to the stockholders of the company of their original investments, together with any unpaid interest.

Though most of the subscribers to the stock of this realty company are members of the Women's University Club, some public-spirited men and women who saw the use of such an institution in the city have subscribed for stock. One hundred thousand dollars was secured by the sale of shares at \$50 each. Of this 320 subscriptions range in amount from \$50 to \$500, while only thirty-seven people have subscribed for \$500 or over. Plainly, the new University Club will be no more of a subsidized institution than the old! Seven shares contributed in small amounts are held in the name of the club. Many members combined in two to buy a single share. Actual sacrifices were made, small privations cheerfully endured, by many women, that they might have their due share of membership in a club which had meant much to



MRS. WILLIAM HENRY HAYS
PRESIDENT OF THE REALTY CO.
AND BUILDING COMMITTEE OF
THE CLUB.



FLOOR PLANS, WOMEN'S UNIVERSITY CLUB
BUILDING



MRS. LANDRETH KING
VICE-PRESIDENT
OF THE CLUB.

THE FACADE
NEW WOMEN'S
UNIVERSITY CLUB
BUILDING



PRESIDENT
OF THE
CLUB—
MRS. EDWARD
PERRY
TOWNSEND



MRS. WILLIAM
REYNOLDS
BROWN
VICE-PRESIDENT.

them in friendliness and opportunity. The whole process of raising the money, while doubtless tedious and laborious to the directors of the realty company, has been most democratic and has demonstrated the deep and widespread affection of the club members for their organization. The subscriptions, however, are not gifts, but investments upon which it is expected that 4 per cent interest will eventually be paid.

With the enormously increased facilities of the new building, the restaurant is expected to pay for itself, despite the familiar criticism of men's clubs that it is the bar which must pay the restaurant expenses! The balance sheets of the women's clubs have almost disproved that popular fallacy. In none of those in New York is liquor sold. Yet the restaurants have by no means been maintained at a great loss. Even with the totally inadequate storage and kitchen provisions of its former homes, the restaurant of the Women's University Club has shown but trifling deficits each year. The restaurant bills, by the way, for the last twelve years have been an interesting commentary upon the increase of the cost of living in New York.

THE RISING LUNCHEON.

In 1901 luncheon used to be 25 cents; by 1904 it had crept to 40 cents, and by 1907 to 50, where it has self-denyingly remained, in spite of beef barons and coffee corners. The dues also have been raised infrequently, from the modest \$10 a year at which they began. Even now they are only \$20 a year for resident members and \$15 for non-residents. The initiation fee for graduates of more than ten years' standing is \$30, while those of less than five years' standing pay but \$15 as initiation.

The rent of the new building will be paid by the dues of the members, now a thousand in number. It is expected that the rent of the rooms, bedrooms to both permanent and transient lodgers, college rooms to college organizations, private dining room and assembly room for occasional meetings will amply pay for the interest on the investment.

Co-operating with the directors of the realty company in the matter of the building is a committee of the Women's University Club. The directors of the realty company are Mrs. William Henry Hays, the president; Mrs. William Reynolds Brown, Mrs. Carl Gluckman, Mrs. Arthur L. Livermore, Mrs. Elton Huntington Hooker, Miss Margaret Chambers and Miss Florence Durstine. The building committed of the club contains, in addition to these ladies, Mrs. William H. Baldwin, Jr., Miss Mary Vida Clark, Mrs. Will-